(b) and (c) Acknowledging this fact, the Government have undertaken the following major initiatives for developing the textile industry and encouraging exports of textile products:—

(i) De-reservation of woven readymade garment sector from SSI.

(ii) Announcement in three consecutive Budgets aiming *inter-alia* at a rationalisation of the duty structure in the textile sector and a reduction of costs of machinery critical for its technology upgradation;

(iii) Launching of schemes of Apparel Parks for Exports and Textile Centre Infrastructure Development Scheme for upgrading infrastructure facilities at important textile centres;

(iv) Implementation of Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme and Technology Mission on the Cotton;

(v) Allowing foreign equity participation upto 100% through automatic route in the textile sector with certain exceptions;

(vi) Launching of a programme for modernisation of weaving capacities in the decentralised powerloom sector; and

(vii) Implementation of schemes in the handloom and handicraft sectors to suport the production, marketing and export of exclusive items that draw upon the heritage and tradition of excellent craftsmanship.

Strengthen the National Cotton Corporation Office in Karnataka

1916. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the amount spent to strengthen the Cotton Corporation of India Ltd. office at Raichur in Karnataka during 2002-03;

(b) whether there is any proposal to shift the above office to some other place; and

(c) the amount earmarked during 2003-04 to take up new activities by the above Corporation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI BASANGOUDA R. PATIL): (a) The branch office at Raichur has

been functioning for last several years and the annual over-head expenses to maintain the same during last two years are as under:

Year	Annual Over head Expenses (Rs. in Lakh)
2001-02	42.11
2002-03	37.72

No extra amount has been spent by the Cotton Corporation of India to strengthen its branch office at Raichur in Karnataka State during 2002-03;

(b) At present there is no proposal to shift the office from Raichur to any other place;

(c) No special amount has been earmarked during 2003-04 to take up any new activities by the Cotton Corporation of India Ltd., at its branch office Raichur. However, the existing set up is being maintained to carry out its usual purchase and sales operations.

Procurement of cotton by CCI

1917. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the total quantum of cotton procured by Cotton Corporation of India and State agencies from various cotton producing States during the last financial year, State-wise;

(b) whether the cotton grower have been paid for this produce;

(c) if not, the details thereof; and

(d) by when the payment will be made?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI BASANGOUDA R. PATIL): (a) (i) Cotton procured by Cotton Corporation of India, State-wise, during the last financial year 2002-03 is as under: